

I. - PHILOSOPHICAL SANSKRIT

In the opinion of orientalists Sanskrit is often admitted as the most difficult language. The additional difficulty is that every branch of Indian literature or knowledge has elaborated its specific form of thought-construction and extraordinary technical terminology. In this connection it is justified that we distinguish Sanskrit not only in the historical aspect of its development as Vedic Sanskrit (which is also divided into several strata), Epic Sanskrit and Classical Sanskrit, but we mention also Sanskrit of Dramas, Ritual Sanskrit, Philosophical Sanskrit etc.

As for Philosophical Sanskrit it is worth repeating the opinion of such great Indian scholar as S. Dasgupta found on the first page of his five volume *History of Indian Philosophy*: « Sanskrit is generally regarded as a difficult language. But no one from acquaintance with Vedic or ordinary literary Sanskrit can have any idea of the difficulty of the logical and abstruse parts of Sanskrit philosophical literature. A man who can easily understand the Vedas, the Upaniṣads, the Purāṇas, the Law Books and the literary works, and is also well acquainted with European philosophical thought, may find it literally impossible to understand even small portions of a work of advanced Indian logic, or the dialectical Vedānta ».

The basic texts of philosophical systems are composed in extremely laconic forms (mostly they are *sūtras* or *kārikās*). The *bhāṣyas* are very laconic, too, and they needed further explanations, supra-commentaries. In all the treatises nominal sentences with multiple *saṃāsas* dominate. There are many multistage abstracts, the homonyms with very different meanings, or — at least to all appearances — with very similar ones, having magic significance. The texts are overburdened by terms; there is no place for common human speech. Many philosophically important terms are neither well-defined nor even partially explained. We have impression that those terms had to be well-known among some groups of people in the past. Very often the distance of time between the

sūtras and their *bhāṣyas*, or between the latter and their further commentaries is of many centuries.

When examining a treaty we cannot be blindly influenced by its commentators. It is a need to examine separately the contents of the basic texts and separately the philosophy of the commentators or the representatives of the later schools. We have always to attach more importance to the history of the ideas and views previous to the examined treaty. Because of reachness of contents of particular treaties it is necessary, too, to examine thoroughly and elaborate the single problems which are philosophically important. After such a solid work it will be easier in future to reconstruct philosophy of particular authors, to discover more certainly historical connections and then to carry out the synthesis of the development of Indian philosophical thought. Professor Ludwik Skurzak, historian of ancient India, told me seventeen years ago that we need to examine Indian philosophy one hundred years more in order to make its synthesis. Now, when retired he says that we need three hundred years more for it. The conclusion may be that we must be patient. *Sanaiḥ sanaiḥ sarvaṃ sādhu bhaviṣyati*.

There is still another problem — it is of transposition into the language of occidental philosophy. The difference in general ontology, specific psychology and gnoseology — that all dynamic in connection with practical way to *mokṣa* which is the *prajyāna* of Indian philosophy — makes a difficult adaptation of the terms of European philosophy. It is very necessary to be cautious at transposition. The best dictionaries would be deceptive or misleading. Although the dictionaries deliver many terminological equivalents of European philosophy, the real sense of the term lies usually « somewhere between » the series of approximate meanings. The substitution of such ready-made equivalents from Western philosophy misleads a person uninitiated in philosophy less than a philosophically educated one, because the first will either understand or not but the specialist of philosophy will interpret correctly or incorrectly depending on the good or bad translation of the text.

II. - SANSKRIT IN PHILOSOPHY DEPARTMENTS

I would like to inform about my partly successful experiment of introducing Sanskrit in philosophy departments. Few years ago two universities in Poland, that is Catholic University of Lublin and Academy of Catholic Theology in Warsaw invited me to introduce and organize regular course of studies of Indian philosophy for the students of Faculty of Philosophy. All the students of the Department of History of Philosophy attend the lectures and exercises on Indian philosophy and they have to pass the examination of it. Besides of that general course the students who are more interested in Indian philosophy attend two years'

course of Sanskrit, especially the students of the first and second year of studies are invited to this course. For the students already advanced in Sanskrit I conduct special semineries at which we read Sanskrit philosophical treatises.

I see from my experience that the students of philosophy are often better in Sanskrit and Indian philosophy than the students of indology (Indian philology). As regards to Indian philosophy it is understandable that the students of philosophy are more interested and clever in philosophy on the whole than those of philology. But what is interesting here is that the students of philosophy have much pleasure in studying difficult but precise structure of Sanskrit. After a half-year's basic course of Sanskrit grammar connected with easy exercises the students are able to read *Bhagavadgītā*. After one year of the course they are ready to start studying the philosophical treatises in original.

Now, what is the method of studying philosophical Sanskrit? — More than 90% of abstract terms are derivations of the verbal roots. The student has to know three elements: (1) the basic meaning of the verbal roots, (2) the subtilty of meanings of praeverbial, and (3) the suffixes which form derivations. If he is taught scientifically to analyse every term into those three elements, then after some time of practice — even though he has to work on a quite new text — he is able to understand almost every word in its basic meaning better than in his mother language and very often he will discover its subtle meaning from the context. Though he is to refer to the dictionaries to acquaint with the history of development of the meanings of every term, to read translations and other works on the subject, by the above-mentioned method he is himself prepared to study independantly the contents of the Sanskrit philosophical treatises. After this three-years' experiment some of the students of philosophy are prepared to study critically Indian philosophy from the original sources. One of them, Mr Tomasz Rucinski (who was formerly my student at Indology Department of the Warsaw University and now is doctorant at the Philosophy Department of Academy of Catholic Theology) is analyzing deeply *Brahmasūtras* and is helping me to teach Sanskrit.

I heard that in Western universities the employment of indologists is now very limited, in spite of the fact that there is very great interest in Indian philosophy particularly among young people. We know that many of the books on Indian thought written both by Indian *svāmīs* and by Western authors which are now available are of very little value. Therefore I would like to propose to try with such an experiment mentioned above to make more interesting the study of Indian philosophy in Western universities. There are many universities and each of them is ambitious to have philosophy department. Because of the interest in Indian philosophy, because of need of good lectures and good books on this subject, and, also, because of the necessity to break nowadays the europocentrism of our philosophical thought, it is necessary to introduce

the regular course of Indian philosophy at philosophy departments for many students interested in it and especially for the students of history of philosophy.

For a scholar it is clear that we need philological work on Indian treatises much more. But we also need the philologically well-oriented philosophers who will study pure philosophical problems and will broaden historian knowledge of them among the other philosophers. I do not suppose it is a fanatic suggestion but a sensible one in view of widening our philosophical horizon. A good student or scholar of philosophy need not be influenced but only to grow sensibilized by the subtle problems of another philosophy.

It would be a good thing, too, to found International Academy of Indian Philosophy in India, may be, under the protection of UNESCO and also backed by some foundations, where serious scholars could contact themselves to exchange their specialized knowledge, and to examine manuscripts to publish good editions, and to educate students of different countries. The ideal place for such an academy, in my view, would be in ancient Magadha, or in Himalayas, or in South India either in Madras or in Mysore State. As in ancient times the Greek, with the result of their contact with East, founded Academy of Alexandria, so now is a need to found such an academy in India. I believe that the academy will not only help to discover anew the deep Indian thought but will also be in future the source for new philosophical ideas serving for wisdom and benefit of the free and open-minded mankind of the future. Such an academy would be something another in its atmosphere and function than the existing many-institutions, traditional universities, the authoratative *āśramas* of nowadays, and the well-proclaimed Auroville, based on material and spiritual slavery reminding European monastery organizations. But here is no place for expounding the idea in detail.